

Chief Master Sgt. Don Collins Completes His Tour With JCC-I/A

by Mr. Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs

After serving as the senior enlisted adviser to former Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) Director Air Force Maj. Gen. Darryl Scott, Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Don Collins went on to follow him to Joint Contracting Command – Iraq/Afghanistan (JCC-I/A) in February, where he served as the command's senior enlisted adviser.

A fact that some within the Agency may not realize, however, is that Chief Collins, unlike Maj. Gen. Scott, was assigned to JCC-I/A under a DCMA billet and has transitioned back to the Agency — a transition he said he is excited about. “It is nice to be back with DCMA,” he said. “How long I will be back, however, is really dependent upon the options I have with the Agency and where the balance of my military career will take me from here.” During his time back with the Agency, Chief Collins plans to help re-establish the connection with deployments and help sculpt the future of the Reserve program here.

While serving with JCC-I/A, Chief Collins credits much of his success with the command to his history and experience with DCMA. “Knowing the ins and outs of DCMA helped considerably with my prior assignment,” he said. “I was able to draw on the experiences received at DCMA to better understand the services, understand the services’ needs and how we can improve our relationships to quickly respond to their needs.”

Serving in a joint environment with DCMA allowed Chief Collins to bypass the learning curve associated with joint assignments. He said his familiarity with the other services allowed him to dig right in, work some familiar details he had addressed at DCMA and accomplish the tasks at hand to keep things moving for the troops there.

Chief Collins said that during the deployment he made it a priority to focus JCC-I/A's efforts on overall mission accomplishment. According to him, JCC-I/A's mission was to provide effective contracting support of vital supplies, services and construction to their customers in a way that supported the direct mission of coalition forces working within Iraq and Afghanistan. Noting that a major factor in mission accomplishment was working with key customers during his deployment, Chief Collins said working with the Gulf Region Division of the Army Corps of Engineers on their billion-dollar rebuilding projects was crucial. Some of their work included overseeing large electricity projects for the Iraqi people, supplying water to thousands of homes within major cities of Iraq and building schools, hospitals, firehouses, border forts, police academies and other facilities to support both the Iraqi and Afghanistan governments.

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Another key factor in JCC-I/A mission accomplishment, according to Chief Collins, was the quality of the people within the command. “The people who make up JCC-I/A are approximately 260 strong with a variety of military, civilian — both government and contractor — and local national civilians,” he said. “It was amazing to see people from all backgrounds and specialties come together to accomplish their objectives that lead to overall mission accomplishment.” Chief Collins said service members, approximately 190 men and women, make up the largest part of JCC-I/A. Of those 190 persons, 57 percent are Air Force, 30 percent are Army and 13 percent are Navy and Marine Corps.

Of all of the responsibilities Chief Collins had during his time with JCC-I/A, he said he worried most about ensuring those assigned to

the command returned home safely. After this, he said he then made it a priority to ensure the quick completion of well-planned projects. “We had a constantly changing environment that required us to continually keep a finger on the pulse. When missions shift and work levels change like they did there, you must be flexible enough to make things happen in a quick and responsive way,” he said. “There, you don’t have years to make things happen or change. You have to be vigilant in your duties for the present but, at the same time, be able to recognize the future operational impacts coming at you full speed.”

Although he had to deal with the daily challenges within the command, Chief Collins said he was grateful for the times when DCMA was able to step in and assist JCC-I/A in resolving some difficult situations. “The

(Above) Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Don Collins (second from left), Joint Contracting Command - Iraq/Afghanistan senior enlisted adviser, takes time to relax and pose for a picture with his staff during a flight from Afghanistan to Qatar.

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most recent challenge the command faced, which DCMA was an integral part of, was an upcoming change to the organizational structure at JCC-I/A,” he said. “All contracting operations fall under JCC-I/A to include the operations that are connected to the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program support. That doesn’t necessarily mean the command had full control, but some operations were operationally controlled and some were tactically controlled by the command.”

Chief Collins said DCMA was crucial in assisting JCC-I/A with contract oversight and quality assurance. “DCMA was always a great help with the contracts they administered to JCC-I/A and always good about overseeing quality assurance to ensure the product is what the contractor says it is,” said Chief Collins. “The command would often get direct feedback from different organizations that DCMA supports telling me they appreciated the services the Agency provided.”

Chief Collins is certain the command will continue to rely on DCMA in closing out



major contracts and keeping control of contract files. He is, “truly thankful JCC-I/A had DCMA work a lot of those files.” Doing so allowed JCC-I/A to shift its workload to other areas, allowing the command to provide quality service to the troops serving there.

Chief Collins said he was fortunate to be able to serve within JCC-I/A, and he is grateful for the friendships and acquaintances here that assisted him during his deployment. “My friendships and contacts at DCMA really came in handy over there, and I want to thank everyone [at DCMA] who directly assisted the JCC-I/A mission with their efforts.”



(Top) Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Don Collins (right), Joint Contracting Command - Iraq/Afghanistan (JCC-I/A) senior enlisted adviser, discusses operations with Army Lt. Col. Maloney at JCC-I/A Headquarters in Bagram, Afghanistan.

(Above) Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Don Collins (fifth from the left), Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan (JCC-I/A) senior enlisted adviser, and Air Force Maj. Gen. Darryl Scott (sixth from right), JCC-I/A commander, pose for a picture with the enlisted service members assigned to the JCC-I/A Bagram, Afghanistan, office.